

BUSINESS OPENINGS FOR GIRLS

SALLIE JOY WHITE

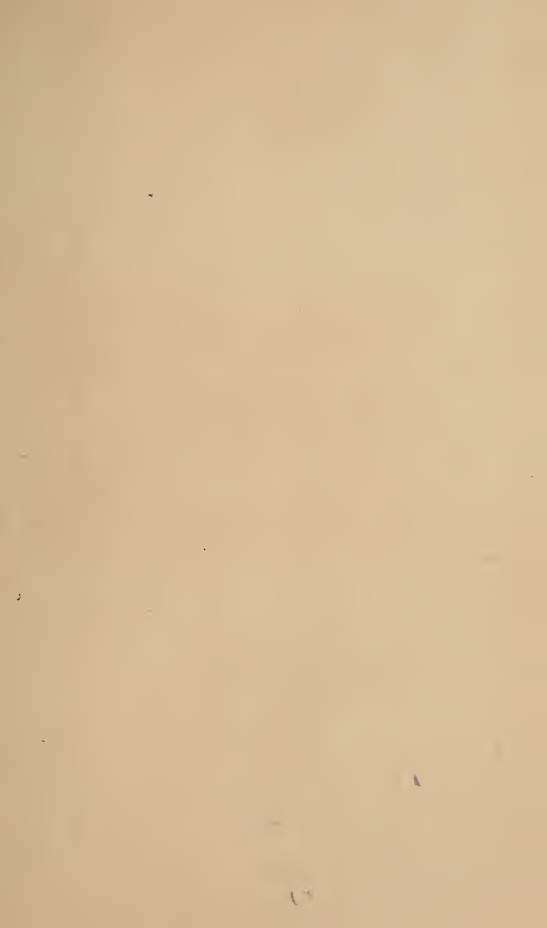


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THE SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS GIRL.

BUSINESS OPENINGS FOR GIRLS

My BY *Sally*
My SALLIE JOY WHITE
Author of "Cookery in the Public Schools"



BOSTON
D LOTHROP COMPANY
WASHINGTON STREET OPPOSITE BROMFIELD

(1891)

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TO
MY DEAR LITTLE DAUGHTERS
BESSIE AND GRACE

WHO HAVE BEEN SUCH AN INSPIRATION IN MY
WORK FOR OTHER GIRLS, THIS LITTLE
VOLUME IS DEDICATED BY THEIR
LOVING MOTHER.

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BUSINESS OPENINGS FOR GIRLS

CHAPTER I.

SALESWOMEN AND CASH GIRLS.

WOMEN who were girls half a century ago, and who, looking back over the years, see what the time has brought both in the way of advantage and opportunity, may well call this, as one of them did to me not long since, "The golden age for women."

My own dear mother had a natural love for the practice of medicine and surgery. She never thought of such a thing as studying and practicing them, but how earnestly she wished she had been a boy so that she might have had her beloved profession. Yet she never dared

to breathe that wish aloud, for it would have been considered "unlady-like," and she would have been regarded as little less than a lunatic had she spoken the wish of her heart into the most sympathetic ear. So, as she did not care to attract undue attention, she kept quiet. And when the time at last came that a woman did study medicine, and take the degree of M. D., and had the liberty to hang out a sign announcing her occupation, my mother had taken upon herself duties which she could not lay aside for a student's life. But no one was more glad than she when this did come about. Other women could have what she was denied, and that made a happiness for her.

"When I was a girl," our noble Lucy Stone once said to me, "I seemed to be shut out of everything that I wanted to do. I might teach school, that is if I would keep as good order and teach as well as a man for a good deal less money; I might go out dress-making, or tailoring, or trim bonnets, or I might

work in a factory, or go out to domestic service. Thus the 'mights' ended and the 'might nots' began. A few years ago, when my daughter left Boston University, with her degree of B. A., she might do what she chose. All the professions were open to her, she could enter into any line of business."

Mrs. Stone did not say, although she might have done so with absolute truth, that it was because she, and others like her, had been persistent and courageous and true, that the way had been made possible, not only for her own daughter, but for thousands of other daughters. Bless her for the brave work she has done!

To-day the young woman pauses to consider which of the many open roads she shall take. It has ceased to be a matter of obligation to her, it is largely a question of choice.

These chapters will not touch upon the professions which are open to women; they are for the girls who have no special desire to study medicine or law or theology; they are for the

every-day, wide awake, alert girls who have business capacity, and prefer an active life to the sedentary one of the student. Neither will they touch upon any of the phases of artistic life. They are to be as practical as possible, and I want to say here that they are none of them theoretical. They will not tell merely what girls may do, but what they have done.

One of the first openings that came to women, outside of the circumscribed list that was given by Mrs. Stone, was that of tending in stores. This opening was made at the time of the Civil War, when so many men went into the army, leaving occupations of every kind, that women must needs do the work. Those of you who have made a study of history understand that when an advance step is made it is never retraced. There is no such thing as going back. So when in the story of the world's progress, you read of the advancement made by women, you take the fact gladly, because it is something done for all time. The women who have lived

and worked any part of the time for the past twenty-five years, have felt that they were living and working in one of the most important epoch's of the civilized world's history. A young girl came to me the other day, alive and alert, as the girl of to-day is, and said, "I am so glad that it has been given me to live just now. I come to all the good things of life as a heritage, and yet not so late but that I catch the echoes of the struggle for its possession, and kiss the hands of the women who have gained it for me." That was just after she had witnessed the closing tableau of the Historical Pageant, which showed the women of achievement, in art, profession, or trade, who stood, nearly a hundred of them, grouped about Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, Mrs. Mary Livermore and Mrs. Lucy Stone. I don't wonder that this girl, full of ideals of true living, thrilled, as she said, "to her finger-tips," when the group sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," and the immense audience rose to its feet to do homage to the

author, who was the central figure of the whole. Being a girl of average ability, and firm principle, it is a good time in which to live. The chances for success are good, and opportunity is better than it ever has been.

Take mercantile life, for instance. I have often heard young girls say that it was all nonsense to expect any preferment there; that only the men got advanced, and that only men became the head of the house. Now there is no reason why a woman should not conduct a mercantile business if she wishes, and if she has the capital. Presumably one reason that women do not is because when they have money they prefer to invest it in some manner which shall bring them a steady income, without exertion of their own. They let the money do the earning, and they take the result. Another reason is, that when girls take a position, they do not, as boys do. take it with the idea of making it a life work. It is with them a temporary matter, a something to bridge over a time of waiting

between leaving school and settling down into homes of their own. With a boy it is serious business; with a girl it is a make-shift.

But when a girl really makes up her mind to succeed, she usually does what she sets out to. There is in the city of Boston a woman, not yet in middle life, who is the proprietor and manager of four large and fashionable millinery establishments. About the year 1879, she began business in quite a small way at the South End. She attracted customers and kept them; her business increased until she ventured to take another store farther down, still keeping the original one for those women who had got into the habit of going there. Still the business grew; a third store, in one of the "millinery streets" down town, was taken, and finally a large establishment on Washington street was opened. Then she added fashionable dress-making to her business, employing the most famous "ladies' tailor" whom she could find. In person she manages the detail of the busi-

ness at all four of her stores, and she spends a part of each day in every one of them. She has no fixed hours; her employés do not know at what time she is coming, so they are always ready for her. She does all her own buying, and there is not one loose end in all this community of business of which she is the real head. Now that woman had no exceptional opportunities; she simply went to work in earnest, and "minded her business" literally. The result is a splendid name, a fine business, and a fortune. The story is not by any means a solitary instance; there are others like it, but I have cited her as an example because I have watched her upward progress, and have known her struggles ever since she had her one shop at the South End.

The success of any one in any line of work depends upon the spirit in which she takes it up. The following story which came under my notice recently, and which is true, will illustrate my meaning better than any explanation. A young girl had tried for a long time to get a

position in one of the leading dry goods stores in Boston. Finally her persistency was rewarded by the promise of a trial. She was put at the handkerchief counter during a "bargain-sale." The first morning she was there a gentleman came by, and stopped at the handkerchief counter, looking carelessly at the goods and the prices which were marked on each box. She did not wait for him to ask for anything special, but she immediately drew his attention to some handkerchiefs which were really a fine "bargain." He did not seem inclined to buy, but she was so interested to make the sale, and talked so intelligently about them, that the customer took half a dozen of the handkerchiefs. When Saturday night came and she was paid her salary, she received a sum much in advance of that which had been promised her. She took it at once to the head of her department, thinking there must be a mistake, but she was assured that it was all right.

"Do you remember selling a half dozen hand-

kerchiefs to one gentleman, the first morning you were here?" he inquired.

"Why, yes, I remember," she replied, "but what has that to do with it?"

"Simply this — that was the head of the firm; and he was so pleased that he inquired about you, and said that any girl who could sell his own goods to a proprietor was worth a good salary and a steady place, so he ordered you put in the pay roll at the wages I have just given you, with the promise of a rise as soon as it is possible."

A thing like this isn't likely to happen every day perhaps; but of one thing you may rest quite assured, my dear girls, simple eye-service is noted more frequently than you imagine, while the honest, hearty rendering of duty will find the reward. Not long ago a prominent business man in Boston said to me, when we were talking over the reason why so few young men really succeed, some things that will bear repetition for the girls who think seriously of a

business life. "The boys"—and he might have said the girls too—"in the store whose watches are always on time at the dinner or closing hour are the ones who will not advance in business; while those who are asking for more to do, instead of making apologies for work not finished, are those who find room at the top of the ladder, and who do not complain of the crowd at the foot." It is the Bible's own "in season and out of season" work that brings good results.

Perhaps another reason why women do not oftener attain a high position in mercantile life is because they do not "learn the business" as a boy does. When a girl seeks a position in a store she expects a living salary at once. The immediate need of money is the force which impels her to work; she must be her own breadwinner. A boy expects to give a certain time to learning the detail of business, and takes a place at first with very small remuneration, and works his way to the more profitable position.

A gentleman in Boston, the head of one of the large firms, who has thought a good deal about this matter, determined to try this training process with girls. So he advertised for one hundred girls to begin a practical mercantile training. The girls were to be graduates of the public schools of the city or near suburbs; they were to live at home, or with friends or relatives who would look after them when they were out of the store. None would be received without the written consent of the parents or guardians. They were to be paid two dollars a week for a year, and at the end of that time were to be advanced as they deserved.

It was a very easy matter to find the one hundred girls; indeed double the number might have been readily engaged, so numerous were the applicants. The duties of the girls at first were to tend the tubes which carried the money to the counting-room, and do up the parcels; they were changed about frequently from counter to counter, so when the year was over every

bright girl knew the stock thoroughly and the prices, and had found out whether she liked the business, and what department she preferred. At the end of the year, the head of the firm requested every girl to write him a letter, telling him how she liked the business, and expressing preference as to the part she desired to serve in. I had the pleasure of reading all these letters, and I was delighted at the intelligence and the character that the majority of them showed. As far as possible the girls were promoted in the line of their expressed preference, and a new lot, double the number, came in to fill the places at the tubes. One of the girls who came in as a tube girl is now the superintendent of the desk of one department, and has a salary of eighteen dollars a week ; another is the head saleswoman at a counter, receiving fifteen dollars a week. Others receive from seven to twelve dollars, the average being ten dollars a week. The quicker they are, the more personal patronage they control, the more

pay they have, because their services are of value. Mr. Jordan, for it is the senior partner of Jordan, Marsh & Co. who made the experiment, says he has never regretted it, for he feels that the girls do better work for the training they get. One of the best proofs of the efficacy of his plan is the fact that every other house is glad to get a girl who has graduated from the tubes at Jordan's.

So you see there are chances for girls, if they will only take them, as well as for boys; but they must be in earnest, must work as though it were a life work, even though they do lay it down after a while; must not despise the day of small things, and must not turn the sympathy of the public whom they serve to ridicule and contempt, by speaking of themselves, as "sales-ladies," but honestly, simply and correctly as "saleswomen," until such time as they shall become the proprietors, wholly or in part, of an establishment, when they will be "merchants."

CHAPTER II.

SALESWOMEN AND CASH GIRLS (*continued*).

WHEN one considers the large army of women and girls who are employed in stores all over the country, the first wonder is that so many can be found to fill the places. In several of the large stores in Boston — the largest ones, of course — the number of girls employed reaches far into the hundreds. At one establishment of note, which has a national reputation, about twelve hundred are on the pay roll. Of these about two hundred are cash girls, four hundred are tube girls, one hundred are stock girls, and the rest are saleswomen. At another large store the number is one thousand. Of these three hundred and ten are cash girls — there are no tube girls — two hundred are

stock girls, and the rest salesgirls. Other establishments, according to their capacity, employ from one thousand to twenty-five.

I tried very hard, for my own satisfaction, to find out just about how many girls was thus employed in the city of Boston alone, but it would take a year, or even longer, by the most systematic method, to ascertain; for not only do the large stores employ them, but every little thread-and-needle store has one or two girls employed, and usually in these the proprietor is also a woman. The number goes a long way into the thousands. And yet there is never a difficulty in filling a position. Does a worker drop out of the ranks, for any reason whatever, somebody is always waiting to step into her place, and oftener than not there are a dozen disappointed ones for the one successful seeker. There is a pathetic side to this, which must be recognized. In spite of the number of women and girls employed, there is an ever-increasing number waiting for the chance. The supply

every year grows still greater than the demand — a condition of affairs which economists always consider unfortunate.

And just here, before stating the duties which devolve upon these girls and women who enter the mercantile life, I want to say a word to the young women outside the large cities who think that the fortune for which they so ardently long may be reached at a grasp within the boundaries of town. There can be no fallacy more fatal than this. It is like believing fairy tales, or taking the Arabian Nights seriously.

The city is no place to come to expecting to find employment, unless one has friends who can use influence in her behalf and befriend her when she comes, friendless and strange, into the midst of a new life. *Workers are plenty in the cities.* One has only to go into the office of some merchant who has advertised for extra help, say at the holiday season. As a rule, if fifty are wanted, five hundred will come to apply. The majority of these have to be disappointed

of course. All these applicants are from the city or near suburbs; and with all this army to choose from, what chance does the girl stand who is unused to city ways and city habits?

I know the impatient frown which will come upon many faces as this is read · but all that I say is true. I have heard country girls talk of coming to the city for employment, giving as one reason that they wanted more social life. Well, that is just what they will not get; the woman of business is not a woman of leisure, and she has no time for society. She will find more social life in her own home, even if she be a worker, than she could ever have in the city, and there is no lonesomeness more absolute than the loneliness of a stranger in a crowd. Salaries are not large enough to permit of much relaxation in the way of entertainments, and after the day's work is over one is too tired to go in search of enjoyment. In the country home, in these days, the daily paper and the magazine comes, so that one may keep in touch

with the world, even if she be at one side of the bustle and confusion of city life. The fashion articles tell her how to dress her hair and make her gown, and gives her the latest notions in small toilet details. No town is so small that it has not its public library, where all the new books come; and the lecture and concert are not infrequent in visits. Railways and telegraphs have brought the corners of the earth together, so that one is never very far away from the centers of things. There are occupations, too, for the girls who stay at home, and particularly those who stay in the country, and these will be talked about by and by. Do not throng to the cities in search of employment, for you will be doomed to bitter disappointment. The country stores employ women, as well as the city stores, and many a girl makes a good beginning in them. I myself know country towns where, a few years ago, nearly every position in the stores were held by young men, which to-day are held by women. Everywhere it has

come to be quite the accepted state of things, that women shall sell goods.

In the city stores the rules governing the duties of the various employés are arbitrary. And they are always rigorously enforced. The law has taken the matter of child-labor into its protecting hands, so that now, no boy or girl under fourteen may be permanently employed. That, then, sets the date of the girls beginning. The cash girls are, as a rule, fourteen and fifteen years of age. Their duty is to run on errands, carry bundles from counter to counter for customers, and be at the beck and call of the salesmen or women. In the days before money was sent to the desk by machinery, the girls had to carry it to the desk and bring back the change and the parcel. But notwithstanding this duty has been taken from them in many stores, the girls still have enough to do and they do not find many idle moments. They have to be at their post all ready to begin work when the store is opened. As most stores open

at eight o'clock this means being there at certainly quarter before eight. They must report to their superintendents, put away their street garments, and be at their places at the unlocking of the door. The time of their arrival is marked against their names, and if they are late they are fined a small sum. In some places they are allowed to work out the fine, by shortening their dinner hour by as many minutes as they are late, but in other places this chance is not given them, and the fine must stand. All day long they are on their feet flying about here and there, and I don't believe anybody is gladder when the big gong gives the signal to lock the doors than are these young girls. For these long hours and all their work, they receive two and a half or three dollars a week, and this must oftentimes be made smaller by the fines. If a cash girl prove herself bright, clever and capable, she may look forward to being advanced into a position as stock girl or sales girl, or given a place in the mail-order department.

The "stock girl," as she is called, has charge of the stock, for a certain counter. She must see that this counter is well supplied, and she must keep the goods in order. She must possess watchfulness, deftness, and pride in the attractive appearance of her goods. Her hours are the same as all the rest, and she has from five to six dollars a week.

It is usually the ambition of every cash girl to become a saleswoman; that is, if she has any marked adaptability for the business. It is a proud day when she is allowed for the first time to attend upon a customer and to supply her wants. When she makes her first trial, she usually proves whether she has the stuff for success in her or not. Many eyes are upon her. The hours that the saleswoman has to keep are the same as those of the cash girl, and she is subject to the same rules, until she arrives at the head of a department, when a little more latitude is allowed. The same system of fines prevails that governs the cash girl. One would think that when a

girl had been given a position of dignity and responsibility that there would be no need of anything like discipline ; but it is found necessary, to the shame of the workers be it said.

Discipline varies in different establishments. In some it is almost military in its severity and its perfectness. The girls are not allowed to converse with each other except upon topics connected with the business ; at other stores they may chatter as much as they please ; they are supposed not to neglect customers, but they often do, or else betray such an utter indifference to the customer's wants that she goes away irritated without making her purchase. I had a funny little experience once in a Boston store. I wanted to match some silk to ribbons, and I went with my pattern. As I entered I was met by one of the proprietors who is known to me, and we walked along to the ribbon counter together. I handed my sample to a girl there, who did not look up, but reaching it back to me said rather curtly : " We've nothing like it."

"But you haven't looked," I persisted.

She was about to persist also, when an odd look on the face of one of the other girls made her glance at me. As she saw the proprietor standing by my side, she turned very red, murmured a confused apology, and began hunting for the ribbon which she very soon found.

I didn't pity her distress one bit; I think I was rather glad that she was caught in that way. It will probably be a lesson to her and she will be more careful in the future.

Quite in contrast to this was a scene I witnessed in another large establishment. I was waiting for a friend who was to have a cloak tried on; it was not quite done, so we sat until it should come downstairs. A lady came in with a little girl for whom she wished to purchase a cloak. The child was large of her age and difficult to fit; but the saleswoman who was attending upon her never lost her patience at all. She tried on, and tried on; she was as interested as possible to please the customer;

she made suggestions, and did all in her power to give the mother exactly what she wanted. The result was she made a good sale, and at the same time secured a constant customer. Do you suppose that the lady will ever go to that establishment again without asking the same one to serve her? Of course she won't. It is women like this one who make themselves valuable to their employers; and they are the ones also, who are steadily advanced, and who come at length to be the heads of departments. They are the women who get the larger salaries; for they are worth the most money. They control a certain amount of trade. Customers will wait for them if they are busy, and will not trade with any one else.

In most of the large stores the proprietors know just how much each salesman or woman sells every day, and in that way it is very easy to keep track of her value to the firm. When girls complain because their salaries are not raised when some other girl is advanced, they

do not take it into account that they have not made themselves of value to those who employ them.

There is something very mean in the mere giving of eye-service. It is a species of dishonesty. With an honorable employer honest service cheerfully given is nearly sure to meet the reward of advancement. I know that it is difficult to always be pleasant of voice, eye and bearing, that it is not easy to feign an interest one does not feel — but the thing to do is to feel the interest. Make the customer feel that you are as anxious that she shall be pleased as she herself is. It will be much easier to please her. There is no reason why the purchaser and the one from whom she makes her purchase should regard each other as natural enemies, and each be constantly on the lookout for some fancied insult or slight. If each would exercise patience and charity they would get on well enough. There is no need because a girl takes a position in a store that she shall proclaim a

declaration of independence by her deportment to every customer — she can't afford to do it. Courtesy, self-respect and an interest in her business are the conditions of ultimate success, and no girl need fear failure if she has these added to a natural ability to do the work she has undertaken. She will not only succeed, but she will win for herself friends who will regard her with admiration and respect, and will make her, in their thoughts, at least, the pattern for other women of her class to model themselves upon.

CHAPTER III.

ARTISTIC AND HYGIENIC DRESSMAKING.

IN every town and village are young women and girls who are anxiously asking what they can do in their own community to earn a livelihood. The big, outside world has no attraction for them. They either want to keep in the shelter of the home, or else there is somebody for whom they themselves must be the home-keepers. Circumstance, rather than desire or ambition, must be the governing power of their lives. If you would know how large is this army of waiting women you should pass a day at the Women's Educational and Industrial Union in Boston, and get Mrs. Osborne to tell you of the appeals that come for help from Maine to Oregon, from Michigan to Florida.

The burden of it all is, "Tell me what I can do at home to earn some money."

I would like to tell you how the Union comes to be besieged with applicants. I am sure the story will interest you, and you may some of you find a word of needed warning and advice in it. Three or four years ago all the newspapers in city and country, daily and weekly, were filled with advertisements headed "Work at Home," and saying that if women would send either one dollar or two as the case might be, she would receive outfit and instruction for artwork to be done at home, and that after they had learned, they would be supplied with work, and could earn a nice bit of money at home. Well, you can have no idea how the responses came in; the dollars literally poured into the hands of the advertisers. In return a piece of very coarse velveteen, stamped with a pattern, and a few needlefuls of silk would be sent with directions for working; when this piece of embroidery was finished it was to be sent to the

supply company, with another dollar, and if it was satisfactory permanent work would be given. In almost all the cases there was no return for the dollar. It very rarely happened that the work suited, or if it did no reply came, and nothing more was heard from the money sent. In hundreds of instances the dollar or two could not be spared and meant such sacrifice as few of us can understand. Presently this matter came to the notice of the Women's Union in Boston, and it set to work to stop the business. It got all the evidence it needed, and then it sent lawyers to the places. In most cases no responsible persons could be found, so nothing could be done by law. It went to the newspapers and got the advertising stopped, and got articles written about it. It couldn't get the money back for the poor women who had sent it, but it could prevent others from being duped. In this way the Union became known all over the country, and women began to write to the Union for work. Of course the Union

could not supply them ; it could only point out to them what to avoid.

There was one thing else plainly shown by the flood of answers which came to this fraudulent advertising. That was, not only were there hundreds, yes, thousands of women wanting work, but the majority were anxious to do "art" work of some kind. Good honest work, that was genuinely practical, found little favor in the eyes of the multitude. Somehow anything that was "art," no matter how bad art it was, hadn't the flavor of labor about it. If it was work at all it was "genteel" work and "ladies" could do it. Now, girls, honestly, isn't that feeling a very silly one? Why, if one finds it necessary to do anything for money, not stand up squarely and face the fact, and do the work that comes to be done, whatever it may be, in a straightforward fashion, instead of dodging about under all sorts of make-believes, and pretending to be what one is not?

I referred to the misuse of the term "ladies"

in a former chapter ; just here I want to emphasize it. It is improper, a mistake in language, to speak of yourself or of any other person as "ladies" in connection with work of any kind. The term "lady" presupposes leisure. In the same way the word "gentleman" carries a like significance. Now you know very well that the term "gentleman of business" is never used, and you certainly never hear of "salesgentlemen." Isn't the very sound ridiculous ? And yet your man of business often is the polished, well-bred man of society, with a position which no one can dispute. You can be well-bred women, even if you are work-women. You may be "ladies" at your leisure. But it isn't the insistence on the term that will make you so. On the contrary, the very use of the term in connection with work stamps you at once as ignorant if not ill-bred.

A few years since I was passing the summer at a well-known seaside resort, and in a sudden emergency I wanted some laundry work done.

I rang for the bell-boy of the hotel and asked him to see if the laundress could do it for me at once. He soon returned with the following reply :

“ I am sorry, Mrs. White, but the washer-lady is out.”

Yes, I know you are laughing at the ridiculousness of it; but take care that you never make yourself ridiculous in a similar fashion.

And now, if you are prepared to take up your work in true dignified work-woman fashion, I have a suggestion to make to those of you who have quick eyes, deft fingers and a true taste ; I might add also, an artistic instinct, but I am getting to be a bit afraid of expressions of that kind—they are quite apt to make mischief. Still there is an art-side to the occupation I am about to suggest, but it must be taken sensibly, and not to the sacrifice of every thing else. I know you are expecting something delightfully new, and I can fancy I hear a murmur of disappointment when I say — dressmaking !

Well, but you must understand that there is dressmaking and dressmaking. It is not the old-fashioned kind that I am about to commend to you, but the new, which has originality, idea and principles about it. The principles are beauty and comfort, the idea is becomingness and health, and all of it combined constitute the originality. I dare say you have all heard of "Dress Reform," and have grown to have a horror of the term because it has stood for ugliness pure and simple, and for crankiness unadulterated. Well, it isn't called Dress Reform any more, but "artistic and hygienic dressing." This phase of it began with Mrs. Flynt when she invented the waist that should take the place of corsets. It was to be adapted to the figure, rather than force the figure to be adapted to it. Mrs. Flynt was wise in her day and generation; she saw that interesting invalidism for women was going out of fashion, and that healthfulness was to become a fashion. She foresaw the generation of tennis-playing,

horseback-riding, mountain-climbing girls, devoted to gymnastics of all kinds, that was to rise up, and she wisely made ready for them. Room to develop, room to grow was the principle upon which she "built" — as the English woman would say — her waist. She did not start a crusade against beauty — no, indeed! "Have everything as pretty as you like," she said, "but be true to Nature." At first women eyed the waists askance; they were suspicious of any innovation on old methods; but by degrees they became interested, and the best proof of Mrs. Flynt's success is the large number of patent health-waists that have been put upon the market since Mrs. Flynt started, and the numbers that are sold.

But that was only the beginning; and it has been left another woman, to Mrs. Annie Jenness Miller, to make a rounding-out of the idea of proper dress. If there is anybody in the world who does not believe that a healthful dress can be a pretty one, I only wish she could

see some of the delicious gowns that Mrs. Miller evolves from that keen, artistic brain of hers. They are simply wonders. They keep close enough to the lines of Fashion not to seem queer ; but each gown is original and picturesque, having in it the very essence of graceful and becoming dressing, at the same time it is on the most strictly hygienic principles. Now there are hundreds of women who would like to adopt Mrs. Miller's dress-plan, but their dressmakers turn up their noses at it, and it is, thus far, as a rule, impossible to get such gowns made. There are a few of the most fashionable dressmakers in Boston and New York who are seriously studying the idea ; but they are the wise ones who look ahead, and who see what is coming, and are going to be ready.

I venture to say that the reason why so few take it up is because it does require originality and artistic instinct to be successful in this line of work. But the girl or woman who is artistic in her feeling, and who has the gift

of expressing this feeling has here a field open before her that she will find very remunerative. It requires more skill to make dresses in this way than in the old stereotyped fashion, because much depends upon individual expression. I will assure you that success lies in this line of work, for no one who sees the models of the dresses but becomes at once enamored of them, and is straightway in despair because she cannot have them. "There is nothing that prevents hundreds of women taking up this dress," said Mrs. Miller a few weeks since, "but the impossibility of finding dressmakers who will attempt them."

That gave me the idea at once of suggesting this occupation to artistic girls all over the country. Here is an opening field that is, as yet, practically unexploited. So many other occupations are overburdened with workers. Here is one asking the workers to come into it. You see that I was right when I told you there was dressmaking and dressmaking. One wants to understand the principles of fitting, but must

be thoroughly emancipated from the idea that the only fitting is over a tight corset. Of course it goes without saying that one must be a good needlewoman, must have an eye for color combinations, and must be able to adapt styles to different individuals. After that the work is simple enough. Mrs. Miller publishes in her magazine, *Dress*, all her new models, so that it is easy to follow her, and the girl with originality may design for herself. If she have the ability to do this she will be more valuable to her customers than if she be only able to follow other people's models, and she may command a large price for her work.

There is hardly a town of any size that will not support at least one dressmaker of this kind, and she may either go to her customers by the day, or she may have them come to her at her own house. Good dressmakers get all the way from two dollars to five dollars a day, according to their ability and their originality. These are city prices, but I suppose there is

no place where a good dressmaker would have less than the first-named price. You see a girl could have a good income, and make herself invaluable to her employers. At the same time she is doing something satisfactory, and is exercising her love for the beautiful and refined, and, with right governing ideas of what is beautiful in a gown, it must be a real delight to work on the pretty stuffs that are used nowadays.

Think this matter over, girls, and see if it isn't a happy thought for some of you. If you know nothing of the matter send to the Jenness-Miller Publishing Company in New York for a copy of the magazine, *Dress*, and in that you will find what you will need to put you in the right way. I am sure that more than one girl will find her financial and business fortune in this work, and also that she will be grateful that it comes under the head of "home work."

CHAPTER IV.

NEWSPAPER WORKERS.

AMONG all the professions that have been opened to women during the past few years, none seems on first sight so tempting as that of newspaper work. I do not say "journalism," for that is a term with which I have little sympathy. It is too dilettanti; too little expressive of the real thing. Your genuine newspaper worker is an honest worker; there's no make believe about him or her. As for your "journalist," well, he's very likely to think more of his title than his achievement. One of the best editors whom it is my good fortune to know, has a fashion of saying, if any one speaks of a "journalist" to him, "Oh! a journalist, is he? Well, he won't suit me, I'm afraid; what

I'm looking for is a good, wide-awake newspaper man."

So what I want to talk to you about is newspaper work. In the beginning, by way of preface or apology, I am going to say that there is some danger that there will be a good deal of "I" in this paper. But as most of it is drawn from personal experience, the presence of this obtrusive little personal pronoun cannot very well be helped.

There is more than one reason why this profession should be regarded as a pleasant one, although it is a question whether the reasons are "good and sufficient." In most cases they are based on wrong premises, and are arrived at through ignorance of the whole affair. In the first place many persons think it an easy way to earn a livelihood; they think the remuneration greater than it really is; others think it a work that brings influence with it, and still others regard it as a somewhat less objectionable mode of work than that done with the

hands, and are very fond of setting off mental labor against the purely manual labor. Others again are ambitious of position and think it a fine thing to have, as they term it, "the public ear." Now anybody, man or woman, who takes up this profession with any ideas of this kind is very far astray, and will make a speedy and signal failure.

It is one of the best professions in the world. It is one which catches and holds the enthusiasm of its workers as nothing else does. It opens possibilities of attainment that are undreamed of when the first steps are taken. But it is a profession that must be undertaken with humility of spirit, and treated always with the highest respect. It cannot be used as a makeshift ; it will do nothing for the one who takes it up carelessly, or to serve a purpose, and drops it after the purpose is served, or some other position won. It gives much to its honest workers, but to the others it refuses its best gifts.

After twenty years of constant work in the

profession which I chose when very few young women had dreamed of choosing it, I am come more than ever to believe that it is a profession specially suited to the woman who suits it. You see I don't say all women, for not all women will make successful newspaper workers, any more than all men will. It is not an easy work, albeit it is fascinating. It, more nearly than any other I know, will answer the description given of women's work in the old doggerel which ran,

“Man's work is from sun to sun,
Woman's work is never done.”

This is really true of newspaper work. It is literally never done. Your paper goes on through everything; it is printed every day, and sometimes several times a day, as in the case of the paper with which I am connected, *The Boston Herald*, which has eight editions every day. Can you understand what that means? Something fresh and new in every one. The last in-

cident caught even in its happening, chronicled in white heat, and put before the waiting public before it is two hours old. Nothing must escape ; every class in the community must be looked after from the merchant-prince to the rag-picker. Do you realize what this requires? Quickness, alertness, and more than that, if you will let me coin a word, *aliveness*. A readiness to do whatever may come to you, to turn out an interesting story on any subject, to make the most of trifling incident, in short, to give *value* to every piece of work put into your hand to do.

Here, for instance, is a sample of what may come to a worker, what has come, in fact ; and it is no exaggeration. Busy on a "special," as a long article to be ready for use at any time, is called, you are interrupted by the call from the managing editor's desk. You answer the summons and find your superior officer with an open letter in his hand.

"I have just heard," he says, "that there is

every likelihood that Mrs. —— will be put on nomination for the School Board. It is to be done suddenly, and isn't generally known. We want to be prepared for the emergency, so will you go out and get a sketch of her to use this afternoon? Get a full column, more if you can, and see what her views are on such and such points," naming them over. "And, by the way, such a person," naming some distinguished individual, "is to arrive this afternoon. Can't you see him and get a little interview? Have it for the morning. Perhaps you'd better go to the station to meet the train; and while you're waiting you might run into Harmony Hall and see what is going on there."

Well, off you go. To facilitate matters you take a carriage and go to the house of the proposed candidate for school committee. She has just gone to see some one who is interested in her nomination, and off you start after her. Perhaps you catch her at this point, and perhaps, which is much more likely, you have to

follow her elsewhere. You find her, get your points speedily, back you go to your desk, formulating your sketch in your mind meanwhile. It's pretty near lunch time ; but there's no time to think of anything but that sketch ; there is a little over an hour in which to catch the edition you want, and at least a column to be written. You lock your door and begin. Somebody knocks, and you keep on writing ; nothing short of the crack of doom or the managing editor's bell will stop your pen. You and Time are having a fine race, and, being a true newspaper worker, you win. Hurrah ! the last line is written, five minutes to spare. You carry the copy to "the desk," there's no time for blue pencil, and up it goes to the composing room.

And now for a good luncheon. But what is this ? The city editor appears ; somebody is ill, an assignment overlooked ; won't you take it, please ? There's really nobody else ; every one is out or busy "catching the edition." It will take you a mile in the opposite direction

from which you are to go to capture your "interview" that is coming on the train; good-by, luncheon. A cup of coffee, or a plate of soup is hastily swallowed, if there is that time to spare, if not you go without it. You get the points needed, write them out on your lap in the horse-cars, then go on to the interview, with "Harmony Hall" by way of diversion. Luckily for you there isn't much going on there—a paragraph will dispose of it—so on you go. You are in time for the train, you look about, there's nobody from any other newspaper there. Your spirits rise, you've scored a point. In comes the train. Your "interview" is amenable, asks you to drive to the hotel and talk on the way. It's astonishing how much information you can get in a very little time. Correct information too, just what your public wants. And here is a point which I desire to give to the would-be newspaper girl. You are of little value to your paper unless the information you get is perfectly correct and reliable, and unless

you know and understand the points which the public and the paper not only want to know, but have the right to know.

Well, you go back with your material and write out your interview. Perhaps you think since that is done you will be at liberty. It may be that you will; and it may be also that you will be asked to go somewhere in the evening and write an account of a lecture, a party, a convention, a fancy fair, or a revival. That is the newspaper day, and pretty much every day. Now whatever else you may believe, do not take it up thinking that the work is light or easy, for you will have a sad and speedy awakening.

In regard to any personal gain of influence or recognition, that comes slowly. In taking a position on a newspaper you are but one of many workers, and you have your own place to make. In the first place you must make yourself of value to your employers, your editors. You must show them that you have within you the quality which will when it has had experience

develop into good working power. This you must prove in small ways before you will be given large opportunities. The mere fact that you have been taken on to a paper does not make you a newspaper woman. You are "on trial" merely, and you must prove your mettle well before you are admitted fully to the inner circle, and recognized as an accepted worker. Some women who have an ambition to be "journalists," seem to think that the whole thing is accomplished if they can write something that is printed, and then have personal notes of themselves put into the papers, saying of them that "Miss Assurance of the *Tattler*" says so and so. Nobody knows who Miss Assurance is, but what does she care? She has been in print. She calls that "being famous," and she speaks of her connection with the *Tattler* in a way that is very funny to those who know the truth of the matter; namely, that this "connection" consists of the acceptance of an unpaid contribution, or the occasional request for

the notice of a small concert or an insignificant book, the payment consisting in a couple of tickets for the entertainment, or the volume to be reviewed. It seems queer that persons should be content to pose as "journalists" on such very slim pretenses as these, but there are many who do, and I don't want any of my girls to join this army of incompetent hangers-on and make-believes. And now if you are ready to become conscientious, honest, newspaper workers, I will deal with something beside negatives, and tell you what you must do.

CHAPTER V.

NEWSPAPER WORKERS (*continued*).

AND now, my girl with newspaper ambitions, what have I to say to you?

A good deal, if only I can say it within the allotted space. Having made up your mind that the work is not easy, but that it is exacting and insistent, being assured that although you may make a comfortable living you will not make your fortune, and knowing perfectly that your personality is to be swallowed up in the paper for which nevertheless you are willing to do your best work, you are ready to hear me, and I hope will listen with the feeling that what I say is true, and that it is for your best good.

You must of course possess the ability to write well, that is to express yourself in good English,

free from all redundancies, with clearness and conciseness. Fine writing is not wanted; by "fine writing," I mean the tendency to the use of excessive metaphor, flowery language, and long words of a foreign extraction. It may not be easy for you to believe—but you will agree with me after a few trials—that the simplest mode of expression, that which is elegant and refined in its simplicity, is the most difficult of attainment. If you watch yourself, you will find that the tendency is to amplification and redundancy of expression, rather than to simple conciseness. You would learn the lesson very quickly could you be an invisible listener to the criticism of the "desk editor," on a piece of work over which you had spent much time, and of which you felt very proud. Doubtless every dash of his relentless blue pencil, through lines over which you had toiled and which had given you most exquisite satisfaction as you read and re-read them, would give you strange pain. You would stand and writhe in mental agony to

hear all this brain labor of yours characterized as "gush," in a tone of unmistakable contempt. But you would most certainly grasp the idea that what the paper wants is lucid statement, a clear bit of description, and an idea understandingly presented. Mind, I am not advocating careless work or work without thought, but the work which has to be most carefully done, and so well written that no one can find fault with either the essence of it, or the mechanical construction.

To be a successful newspaper woman, and by that I mean one that is versatile, and can be put to do work of any kind on any topic, one must be fairly well-read, must be up in historical subjects, must have some ideas about the movements of the time, and must be quick to catch the spirit of things. I know many well-read, highly-educated women, whose ideas are worth a very great deal, but who would never make good newspaper workers, simply because they never can be made to have any idea of relative values

of things. They do not know how to take the public pulse ; they have no genius for selection ; and so while they are valuable friends for newspaper workers to have, who can learn much from them and take the available knowledge which they are usually ready to give, they can do no practical work themselves. You know, I dare say, from experiences of your own, that it is not always the person who knows the most who can best impart information. One must know how to give out, as well as to take in, to make a good teacher, and the same qualities, in a great degree, are necessary to make a good newspaper woman.

It requires good physical as well as good mental endowment, to make a career successful. No one who has not a good constitution, unimpaired health, and a perfect nervous system should ever think for a moment of entering this profession. Even all this is very likely to be thoroughly tested if one enters the rank and file of the workers, and is held by office require-

ments and rules. In no profession does one have so much to meet in the way of physical disadvantage as in this. No matter what the weather may be, if a piece of news is needed, it has to be got. Papers, especially the dailies, don't wait on the weather clerk's convenience, they "do" in spite of him. Often there is a great irregularity in eating; hours of labor are uncertain. You are at the behest of others, and you must always be ready to respond. I consider it only right to put this all before you, for it is better to know that there is a "seamy" side to things, before you undertake the work, than to fancy it all smooth and even before you begin, and find out your mistake afterwards.

But if you have splendid health and no nerves; if you are well-equipped mentally; if you are ambitious to learn your profession, and willing to begin with the alphabet of it; if you will understand that your remuneration will be small at first, and that severe economy will be necessary in order to get on; if you are free

from the nonsense which possesses so many girls, then you may undertake the work, and feel sure that there is no more delightful profession in the world, nor one in which you may succeed better than in this of newspaper making.

In this paper I am not considering the literary worker, she who writes for magazines or story papers; nor the one who, in the shelter of her own home, writes letters for daily papers. I mean the young woman who goes into the newspaper office, has a desk there, "takes assignments," and goes out and attends to them; going to her work as the young men go to theirs, and working side by side with them.

I believe in beginning at the very beginning of things. You may be a little inclined to turn up your nose at being sent to describe a store window, or to make a paragraph about a removal. But it is all in the way of education, and when your superior officer, your city editor, finds that you do the small things understandingly you will be given larger things to do, and

it rests with yourself to make your work valuable, and in this way to advance your own position. The trouble is so few are willing to begin at the beginning; they want to strike in somewhere along in the middle, or they will make a bound for the very top — and often come down quite outside the bounds of the profession.

I have in mind a young woman with “journalistic” — mark the word — aspirations. She had had little or no experience, but she made up her mind to begin as art or musical critic. She found all such places occupied, but she didn’t see why the people who had grown up to the knowledge of the work, and were of value to their papers, shouldn’t step aside and give her a chance. With the insolence of inexperienced and uninstructed youth, she really thought that her claim was the greater, because she was “new and fresh” — very fresh, if one may drop into newspaper slang — and that those people who had the wisdom born of experience should be put one side in favor of her youth. She was

quite indignant because it was suggested that she win her place by showing her ability to do any kind of newspaper work first. Now a girl like that will not ever become the good newspaper woman; she never will gain the position she desires. While she is standing outside with folded hands,* waiting for somebody to die or resign and so leave an opening for her, another woman, or a man, may be is fitting for the place which will be hers or his because he has won it. Positions don't come by way of legacy in a newspaper office, I assure you.

Having once obtained the chance to make a trial of your powers, it depends upon you to make the trial a success, and your position a permanency. In the first place do *everything* as well as you can. Put as much good work into a report of the most trifling nature, as you would into an important editorial. Carry your conscience with you all the way along. Never let any feeling of private pique or private personal interest enter your work. You are a

part of the paper which you represent, and you must give your work all the dignity and impartiality that belongs to the paper. There is nothing a good editor resents so quickly as the feeling that any member of his staff is using the position occupied as a means of carrying out private schemes, whether it be of advancing an interest or pulling down a reputation. You must be above small prejudices and personal pique in your professional career, no matter how much you may indulge in them in your private capacity.

Above all things do not try to enhance your own interests by writing about yourself and your own affairs and accomplishment in any paper with which you are connected. There is nothing which so quickly opens a person to ridicule as the habit of constantly writing about herself. Some persons think this fame. It is simply the most palpable and laughable kind of self-laudation. The editors who allow any personality of this kind are few ; it is often

seemingly allowed when really it is overlooked and escapes the editor's notice. It ought never to be allowed, and no girl should show such a lack of good taste as to allow herself to make this very pitiful bid for notoriety.

In regard to remuneration, which is what every possible worker wishes to know about, it will be found to be much less than is generally imagined. There have been so many sensational stories written concerning the money earned by writing that hopes are very high. But here the truth is to be told — the number of women who are earning less than one thousand dollars a year is very much greater than those who are earning that amount. A girl has to work some time, unless she has an unexpected piece of good fortune, before she will earn as much money as a school teacher, and she will work all the time — with a possible two-weeks vacation — instead of having the long vacations and the “off” days which the teacher has. The newspaper women of Boston who earn one thou-

sand dollars a year and over may be counted on the fingers of one hand, and all of them are women who have served a long apprenticeship — none less than ten years, the most even a longer one.

And still, to the girl with the true newspaper instinct, and with health, ability and high principle, I would say choose as your profession this the best of all, and you will find your place if you seek it honestly, industriously, modestly and conscientiously. It is a work that pays you for the doing, not only in the money you earn, but in the pleasure and profit you gain from it, so you undertake it in the right spirit, and by the right methods.

I speak to you out of twenty years of experience, so I feel that I speak “by the book.”

CHAPTER VI.

STENOGRAPHERS AND TYPE-WRITERS.

WITHIN a few years a new industry has sprung up which has proven very attractive to a large number of young women, who have turned to it as a pleasant means of earning a livelihood. I mean stenography, or shorthand, and type-writing. Perhaps it would be better to speak of these as two occupations, rather than as one; for although it follows, almost as a matter of course, that the stenographer uses a type-writer when she writes out her notes, it does not equally follow that every girl who uses a type-writer is also a stenographer. It is better for her if she is, as she will be more accurate when working from dictation, although it doesn't matter if she is only a copyist.

The great danger with this, as with so many other new avocations, is that it will become over-crowded, and as a consequence the pay will be diminished. It is one of the laws of political as well as social economy, that if the supply is in excess of demand, the value of the work is lessened. I think you can all understand this without any difficulty. And you may feel that you know one of the underlying principles of political economy ; that bugbear that you hear talked about so much.

Nothing shows so plainly the number of women and girls who either need to earn money because they must be bread-winners, or who want to earn it in order to be independent, as the rush to take up any new industry that is offered. There is no thought of fitness for the work ; the idea is simply that of getting employment that shall pay. The idea of special preparation does not occur to the majority of young women who undertake work of any kind, except of course a profession, where one cannot get on without

work beforehand, and careful study. And right here is found one of the reasons why women are so seldom advanced in their position. They do not take up the work with the earnestness that men do; it is more often than not a temporary make-shift; a something that must be done to bridge over a certain time of waiting, usually the time that elapses between school and marriage. It is not regarded as a permanent thing, and the girl very openly says that she accepts a position of the kind only until such time as the coveted position of wife is open to her. Now in one way that is all right and natural. There is no one in the list of employments, in all that come to a woman's hand to do, so important or beautiful as that of making the home. But it must come naturally, and it must not be too openly anticipated. The work meanwhile must be just as faithfully done, as much heart and brain put into it, as if one expected to do it forever. It makes the way easier for other women who have to follow in some foot-path of toil, and it adds

to the self-respect of the worker, as well as to her value to her employers. So while I would not have you look lightly upon the most royal gift that can come into your life, neither would I have you stand in an attitude of waiting expectancy, but go on in a dignified fashion, rounding out your life in every way, until the great glory of perfected womanhood comes into your life ; then take it, feeling that it is yours by divine right.

Stenography is, in truth, a profession. It requires hard study and long practice to make one proficient. It is not easily acquired, and it is really a great memory test. Experienced stenographers say that two years is a reasonable time in which one may expect to work fairly well after beginning study. To be sure there will be work that one may do in less time, but it is not safe to attempt very long pieces of work — except of course for practice — in a much less time. To be sure some persons learn more readily than others, but I am speaking now of

the *average* pupil. Now type-writing, which is a purely mechanical labor, can be learned in a few days ; and it is only a question of practice when one may become an expert. As I have said, not all type-writers are stenographers ; and in some cases there is no need that they should be. I know one young woman who can write from dictation, on the type-writer, as fast as any one can dictate, and not once in a hundred times miss a word, or make a mistake. She works entirely from dictation, and she has a salary of fifteen dollars a week. She considers this good pay. There are times during the year, when if she were not steadily employed, but worked "by the piece," she could make much more money during a week, but when the unemployed weeks and the dull weeks are taken into consideration, she really would average no more a year than she does under the present arrangement and possibly not so much. At any event, she feels much better satisfied to know that she has a fixed sum upon which to depend than to

feel the anxiety, which one cannot help feeling whose employment, and consequent income, is more or less spasmodic. Right here let me say that this salary is considered large. A bright young woman, who is an expert stenographer and type-writer, tells me that the number of girls who get less than ten dollars a week is larger than those who get even that sum. Eight, nine, and ten dollars a week are the most frequent wages, while the girl who gets steady occupation at twelve, fourteen and fifteen, feels that she is indeed in luck, and that her fortunate star is in the ascendant. This young woman herself gets fifteen dollars a week, but she has a very important and onerous position as confidential clerk in a large newspaper office. You can see at once that large intelligence, with information, and clear common sense, are needed. Both the young women of whom I have spoken are more than ordinarily well educated. They are good French and German scholars, know something of the classics,

and have a good knowledge of English literature and history. And I wonder if you girls, who have an idea of taking up either one or both of these branches as a means of livelihood, understand how necessary a knowledge of history and literature is to you. The better informed you are on these topics, the wider will be your opportunity. A gentleman who had been engaged on a special piece of literature, in which he employed a type-writer, said to me that he had no idea of the difference of attainment in young women who did this work until he had this experience. When he began he employed a young woman who had been recommended to him quite highly. In some respects she was very good. She was accurate in following him, but she was not a good speller, and she never knew if her employer made a mistake in date or event, as will sometimes happen to even the most careful. He had to carefully revise her work, and take out everything of which he was not altogether certain. While the work

was in progress she was taken ill, and she sent him a substitute. He says that her illness was his salvation. The substitute went far ahead of her predecessor. She was quick and alert; not only did she write rapidly, but she was ready to challenge mis-statement, and she often made the suggestion that gave a needed point. "It was a delight to work with her," said the gentleman, "and when the work was done, I paid her more than she asked, for I felt if the first one had earned that sum of money, surely this one had earned much more."

I asked one of my type-writing girls some questions, and I am going to give you her own words to me. She has been in the work some time, and has occupied her present position over two years and is very highly valued by her employers.

"Tell you about type-writing? Certainly. Is it a good business for a girl? Well, that depends. You see it must be a good girl for the business, in order to make it a good busi-

ness for the girl. There are the two sides of the matter. There must be natural qualifications, else the girl will not succeed. You don't expect every man to make a good doctor, or minister, or lawyer, or newspaper man, do you? Certainly you don't. Every man cannot succeed as a stenographer or a type-writer; neither can every woman. It requires a good memory, an ability to spell well, a knowledge of the rules of grammar and rhetoric, a generally good education, and by that I mean an understanding of affairs and a knowledge of events, especially historical, a quick eye and hand and no nerves. You see the list of requirements is a long one, and each one is imperative. Many girls are attracted to the work because they think it a pleasant way of earning money, and because it seems a step in advance of so many other things; a girl, for instance, would rather say that she was a type-writer than that she sewed in a shop. It is one of the class of intelligent professions that presupposes a cer-

tain amount of education. Not all who begin the study carry it through — this refers particularly to stenography — and many who do carry it through, getting to the end of the course some way or other, do not make it available after they finish. The fault is not in the method by which they were taught, but in themselves ; they haven't the requisites. When they come to be put to practical work, they make sad failures.

I am always sorry for these girls ; I only wish they could have known their unfitness before spending time and money in study. Another important quality needed, especially if one takes an office position, is discretion. Naturally one hears a great deal about people, and unavoidably learns much not only of their character, but of their private affairs, and it should be understood that this knowledge is to be put out of the mind as speedily as possible. Why, a stenographer could make no end of trouble for individuals if she were not discreet.

Some people seem to regard a confidential clerk as a sort of receptacle into which they may pour their real opinions about everybody with whom they are connected in a business way. When you come to think of it, isn't it queer that a man should talk in so unguarded a manner concerning any one with whom he has business relations? I suppose he realizes that he trusts certain knowledge of his own affairs to a confidential clerk, and he must of necessity believe in her integrity and honor. So you can easily see how necessary discretion is. I'm not sure but that I should have named it first in degree of importance."

I think these words from one of the workers will be better than all the theoretical words I could give you. I will add just a few words given me by Mrs. Isabel C. Barrows, one of the most expert stenographers in the country. She is the woman who took down a speech of Carl Schurz, delivered in German, in English shorthand — one of the most wonderful pieces of

stenographic work ever done by man or woman. She is also a teacher of stenography, in the little time left from her editorial duties. She says the reason why so many women fail is that they have not acquired, as a rule, the habit of practical thought as men have. The whole plan of woman's education up to the present time has been insufficient and superficial, while men have been trained in harder schools and more thorough methods. As a consequence, the masculine thought-habit is better developed, and the qualities most needed in this special work are more common in man than in woman. This is not the fault of women so much as it has been the misfortune of their training. That all of them have not suffered from this wrong method is proved by the good work done by so many.

The great trouble is, as I hinted in the beginning, that so many girls, impelled by the success of the few, which has become traditional, rush into the work without stopping to consider

whether or not they are fitted for it. It is, as my type-writing girl said, an idea that pleases them, and they take up the business without considering their capacity. But for those who succeed, it is a pleasant employment, and as things go, fairly remunerative.

CHAPTER VII.

PRESERVES AND PICKLES.

THE stay-at-home girl is thinking by this time, no doubt, that she should have a little attention paid to her and her special needs, so I will devote a few pages to her now. I cannot tell you how strongly this girl, or woman—for sometimes it is the mother of a family upon whom the burden of bread-winning rests—appeals to me. She is hampered by so many circumstances; she cannot go out into the world to do her work, for duty holds her where she is, and there she must stay. Consequently her choice of occupations is circumscribed; she can do only what comes to her to be done.

The suggestion I am going to make to her

is embodied in the personal experience of one woman. Many, I think, may draw counsel and help from the story. But I want to say just this first: look over your stock of accomplishment and see what you can do best, and try to turn that to your advantage; see if you cannot make it *pay you something*. You will take notice that I say accomplishment, and not accomplishments. I mean literally the something that you have done, and done well, no matter how small or humble it may be, not the showy veneer that passes current, under the name of "the accomplishments." No; I insist upon the literal definition of the word in this case.

A lady whom I know tells the story of a friend of hers who was unexpectedly left in a position where self-support became imperative. For a time she was bewildered. She could play the piano, she could paint, both somewhat better than well; she was a graceful letter writer with a pleasing knack of expression that some of her friends took for talent. But she could

make none of these "accomplishments" available. She could not obtain pupils enough to pay her either for her time or her trouble, and the editors of newspapers and magazines did not find the peculiar charm about her work that her friends declared it possessed. She was almost at her wits' ends, and was really beginning to think that there was no place in the world for her, when she suddenly found her vocation. And what do you think it was? Simply this: frying potatoes. Humble enough, wasn't it? and unpromising. But a good deal came of it. She could fry potatoes in the special fashion called "Saratoga chips," deliciously, and among her own friends her fried potatoes were quite famous. One day it occurred to her to take orders for them, and see what she could do. Her friends were glad to get her delicious fried potatoes, and she had very soon a small but paying business. Then her fame went out into the large city near by, and she supplied families there. The business increased so that

she was obliged to take in assistants, and she is now on the high road to prosperity, just because she could do one thing, though a very simple one — better than her neighbors. Now, I don't for a moment suppose that every woman who wishes to earn her living at home is going to preparing "Saratoga chips" for the market. I tell this only to show you what may be done when a person has one thing in which she can excel others.

Nor was it the story I started to tell you; it came along naturally, in passing, and was so to the point that I could not refrain from telling it.

My especial story is for the young woman who lives in the country, and who has an opportunity to get at berries, and small fruits; perhaps lives on a farm where they are raised, or may be, with work and care. The woman I am going to tell her of, lives on a pretty little "home farm" of a few acres just outside the busy city of Pawtucket in Rhode Island, and

not far from Providence. She had been a book-keeper in one of the Pawtucket mills, at a large salary, and had married and settled down on the home farm. Accustomed as she was to a busy life, and above all to being the mistress of a pocket book of her own, she soon found herself missing it, and wishing that she had something to do. Like the woman with the "Saratoga chips," she found her vocation quite by accident. Her mother had been a notable New England housewife, whose cooking and, above all, whose pickle and preserve-making were famous in the neighborhood. Her daughter had inherited this peculiar ability, and was as proud of her store closet as her mother had been before her. It happened, one autumn day, as she was making a special kind of pickle, which was liked by all the friends who had the good fortune to taste it, one of her neighbors came in to call. She began comment upon the pickles, bewailing her own ill-luck in making them, and ended by saying how she did wish that it was

possible to obtain some. It was at that instant the money-making idea came into Mrs. Thornton's head.

"I will make some for you," she said.

"You!" replied her friend.

"Yes; why not? You want pickles, I want occupation."

And so the thing was settled, and so soon as others heard that she was willing to undertake the work they came to her with orders, and she found plenty of pickling to do. Then came requests for catsups, sauces and relishes and she filled those orders.

Her neighborhood success set her to thinking seriously, and during the winter she laid her plans. She saw friends in Providence and took orders for jellies, preserves, pickles and things of a like nature, and she made arrangements with the Woman's Exchange to send her any orders they might get, and also to take what she might have to spare on sale at their rooms. As soon as the spring opened she be-

gan her work. She looked after her strawberry beds and her raspberry and blackberry vines. She looked to see that her fruit-trees were in condition. She tended her cucumber vines and her tomato plants. Her garden had come to mean something more than merely the appendage to the family comfort; it was to be the basis of supplies for the new business.

All summer she worked; as the fruit ripened she "put it up." The strawberries, most delicate of all fruits, she picked herself, hulling as she picked, so that they need be handled but the once, and taking great care that they should not be crushed. Currants she allowed others to pick for her, and so with the hardier fruits that would not be harmed by the handling. She used the greatest care in making her jellies and her preserves, and the results were most satisfactory. From the time the first fruit ripened, until the last pickles were made in the early autumn, she was constantly employed. It proved to be a remunerative employment. The second year

her business increased, and now she has all she can do. She might enlarge it, but she does not care to undertake to do any more than she can do herself, as she fears that if any one undertook it with her the results would be less satisfactory than they are. Like a sensible woman, she concludes that enough is as good as more, and she makes sufficient money during the busy months to keep her all the year through, and let her do what she likes in the way of improvement of her place, of journeying about in her leisure season, and of having many things in the way of luxury that otherwise she would have to go without. To be sure with her the work was not a real necessity ; but the result would have been the same if it had been. She had, too, the advantage of owning the place, but there are other women who have the same advantage. There is many a woman living in the country who, although not the owner of a farm, has a garden spot which she might devote to the growth of small fruits, and turn these into money

by making the preserves and jellies that will find a ready market at good prices.

Mrs. Hinckley in Dorchester, just outside of Boston, does a large business. She has regular private customers whom she supplies by order every year, and the Women's Educational and Industrial Union takes all she can spare from her private customers, and finds a ready sale for it. Another woman in Cambridge, who does precisely the same thing.

Of course not every one who lives in the country even, can do this. One must have patience, and the natural aptitude for cooking, to be successful in this business. It never follows that any one can do a thing well, simply by wishing to do it, but there are enough who can do just this thing well, to make it worth their trying. It is not very difficult to find customers; the women who are never successful in putting up fruits will gladly avail themselves of the skill of those who can. Nearly every one, too, has friends in town or city, who will

be glad of the genuine country fruits, well prepared, the fruit fresh, the sugar good, and with the home care that makes the difference between the work well done with good results or carelessly done with indifferent results. Then, too, the business does not last all the year around, and there is well-earned leisure for study and other work. It is absorbing while it does last, and it takes the time in the summer, the pleasant part of the year, when one feels the least like exertion possibly. But one is willing to work to reap such results. It is a good plan, if one lives near a large town, to make an arrangement with some leading store to keep the goods on sale, if one has more than is needed to fill private orders. People in towns buy preserves and canned fruits in quantities from the stores; would they not prefer, if they knew it was obtainable, the carefully-prepared home preserve, rather than that prepared in bulk at some factory, and put up by wholesale in hap-hazard fashion? Of course they would.

CHAPTER VIII.

GUIDES AND SHOPPERS.

ABOUT a year ago people coming home from Europe had a good deal to say about the "lady guides" of London. It seems that some bright, educated women, feeling the need of earning money, had the idea of forming an association of lady guides, whose business it should be to show strangers, particularly ladies, about London and its suburbs, extending their duties even to remote points if desired, although the field which they particularly undertook to cover was the city itself. The idea proved a most happy one, and the women connected with it speedily had all they could do. In these days of electricity it takes an idea but a short time to travel; and so eager are women for all the

new employments that are opened to them that they no sooner hear of any experiment in an industrial line than they go ahead to try it for themselves. The work in London was reported in New York, when straightway it was taken up there, and an association formed which is called "The New York Ladies' Guide and Chaperon Bureau." It has issued a circular which it is sending about, and I am going to quote from it so as to give the girls some notion of the work. It is even more far-reaching than the one in London, and has added quite a number of new features. The managers of the Bureau are Mrs. Hardy and Mrs. Carolyn Faville Ober, and they have an office at No. 24 Union Square, East. The circular informs the public that their guides have a practical knowledge of the history of all important places of interest, and being armed with the association's badge and credentials, receive a more cordial recognition than the mere stranger. From these advantages and from the varied experience among shops of

all kinds, the benefit to be derived is self-evident. The circular goes on to say :

“Our chaperons, selected with the utmost care, place at the disposal of young ladies, whose mothers or guardians are unable to accompany them, the facilities so often required of going to the theater or concert. Young ladies are escorted from and to their homes ; or school children to and from school.

“We will send out home or foreign excursion parties of ladies under the care of experienced chaperons, who will attend to all ordinary and necessary details.

“We undertake to furnish choice seats for all places of amusement, to send carriages whenever desired, to direct permanent or transient guests to, or engage rooms at, the best hotels and boarding-houses ; to secure railway and steamboat tickets and berths, to meet at the depot strangers coming to the city, and to make, when required, all arrangements for their comfort during their stay.

“The bureau can be used to great advantage by those living in the suburbs, expecting friends whom it is desirable they should meet. By telephoning to the bureau, a chaperon can be sent who will conduct the visitor from one station to another, and save time and money for the patron without discourtesy to her friend.

“There are many ladies living out of New York, who wish to make purchases here, but are unable, or find it inconvenient to come to the city. For such we shall be glad to execute with promptness and dispatch shopping orders, large or small; and consequent on arrangements made we are able, with great advantage to our patrons, to select any kind of musical instrument.

“A new and important feature of our work is to provide lady experts to assist in, or take full charge of, the interior decoration of a house; furnishing it throughout; selecting books for libraries, etc.

“Attention is paid to the receipt and forwarding of mail matter.

“Elocutionists, lady pianists and singers supplied for entertainments.

“Suburban ladies who desire to change their toilettes for city entertainments can make use of our rooms.

“There is no aid or service that one woman may be able or required to render or perform for another, that will not be cheerfully undertaken, and the best efforts made by us to give satisfaction.

“To make the bureau really of service, charges will be moderate ; the following being the schedule of charges :

“Guides for shopping and sight-seeing, according to competency, \$3.00 to \$3.50 and \$4.00 per day.

“Guides who will act as interpreters, 50 cents to \$1.00 a day additional.

“Deductions made for weekly engagements.

“Chaperonage to the theater, \$1.00.

“Chaperonage of children to and from school, per week, \$2.50.

“ Directing to boarding-house, 25 cents.

“ Securing room and board, 75 cents.

“ Securing seats for the theater for one or more, 50 cents.

“ Use of room for changing toilette, meeting dressmaker, etc., 50 cents.

“ Physicians and lawyers recommended 50 cents.

“ Type writing 5 cents per folio.

“ Shopping orders executed for 5 per cent. on the amount purchased.

“ Meeting ladies at station, accompanying young ladies and children, or any brief service will be charged at the rate of 40 cents an hour.

“ Carriages procured, railway, steamship and berth tickets secured, and general information given, free of charge.”

This circular is issued by an association; but the rules and the scope of work may give a hint to some young woman of what she herself may do. She might not be able to undertake so much, but she could select what she could do. Yet not

every young woman can undertake the task of entertaining people, for this is practically what a guide must do. There are certain indispensable requisites. In the first place one must be well-educated, able to talk well, understanding all the history of places which she is to show. She must be well-bred and courteous, and she must have some knowledge of human nature. She must possess kindliness and tact. Meeting many different kinds of people she will need all these qualifications. If she is in a large city she must know what is going on at the various theaters and places of amusements, so as to know just where to take her party. She must know the picture galleries, keep run of the art exhibitions, and she must know the best shops for bargains. All this a bright, quick city woman may learn, and she may keep her knowledge at her fingers' ends.

Having these requisites, and being sure also that she has a fund of cheeriness and good temper, and is ready to meet any emergencies that

may arise, she may start on her work. Of course she must find a way to gain patronage. She would do well to make friends with the leading hotel people, and the best of the shop-keepers. Let her have cards prepared, stating what she is ready to do, giving as references the name of her clergyman, and one or two men or women whose names will carry weight. Let her leave these cards at the hotels, and let her also insert an advertisement in the leading papers. Then she should be at the various hotels at certain stipulated hours to see if any one needs her. All this time friends are speaking for her, and if she has any acquaintances in outlying cities, she has asked them to recommend their friends to her care while in town. In this way it will not take long to work up a good business. Two or three young women might act together, and find enough to do. Strangers are always coming from all over the country to the various cities. Men bring their wives and daughters when they take a business trip, and they are

obliged to go about by themselves while the husband and father is transacting business, or to stay in the hotel waiting until he can return to them and take them about. Now a competent and agreeable lady guide would be a "perfect blessing" to a party of this kind. All the time could be well employed, they would see just the things that are best worth seeing, and the head of the family would have freedom for his business duties, and not be concerned for the welfare of his family. Every body would be pleased, and the guide make her money easily.

It should not need to be said, but alas! the necessity does exist for saying it, the guide must take care to be well and quietly dressed. She must look and be the refined gracious woman who for the time is acting the part of hostess, and she must remember that to be anything less than refined in her outward appearance would be an insult to her guest, or to the person who for the time occupies the position of guest.

A dark cloth gown, tailor-made, with wrap to suit, and bonnet to match, nice linen, gloves and boots, and you are ready. Wear a bonnet rather than a hat, for it is in better keeping both with your costume and your employment. A bonnet is always ladylike ; while there is an informality about a hat that is not appropriate to the occasion. Your prices you can take from the circular that I have given you. It is a fair list. Of course it is understood that your party pays your expenses, the car fares, lunches, etc. That is, she may allow you to do it, but you must keep the account and settle the expense at the end of the day.

As you will not, probably, be employed as guide constantly, you can add to your duties those of shopping on commission. In this your friends outside the city will be of great service to you. They may influence people to send to you, and thus enlarge your business constantly. When you are well established you may be able to make such terms with the leading houses as

will induce them to give you a commission on sales, in addition to the commission you receive from the shoppers, and in this way you may make your income from both sides. Of course the houses would not do this until they found your business was a valuable one; unless, indeed, you should happen to know the heads of the firm, and they feel willing to do this for you to help you establish yourself.

I know one woman who makes a good income by shopping on commission, and doing nothing else. She not only shops for out-of-town people, but she has a set of families in town for whom she shops. She goes every morning to their houses, receives her commissions, and goes out to fill them. In this case she is paid a certain salary, because she must report every morning for duty whether there is anything to be done or not. Each family pays a small stated sum — two dollars or two dollars and fifty cents a week and car fares — and with several families to serve this makes a good income.

You will understand that the successful shopper must be a person of taste, must know the very latest fads and notions, and must possess good judgment in selection, and an artistic eye in matching.

CHAPTER IX.

PROFESSIONAL MENDERS.

IT is time to turn again to that class of workers who do not want, or cannot take, steady employment away from home. The plan that I am going to suggest may mean absence from one's household a few hours at a time, but so much may be done at home that the other hours do not really count. The work is a homely one, but it is extremely useful, and is in the interest of economy. The stock in trade is a capacious work-basket with scissors, thimble, thread, silk and cotton tape, buttons all kinds and sizes, and all the other little appliances that naturally belong to such a basket, deft fingers, and an unlimited stock of patience. With these at hand, you may set yourself up in business as a pro-

fessional mender, and if you manage it properly, you will soon have a large class of customers and plenty to do.

It was Miss Josephine Jenkins who wrote in the *Boston Herald* :

“ With all the wish in the world to earn money, women let many ways of doing so escape their notice simply because they are lacking in practical application. Here, for instance, is one means by which an honest penny, if not an entire support, could be obtained : It is to become a visiting mender. And what does that signify ? asks the impecunious seeker of fortune. What is the ‘visiting mender’ ? Nothing more nor less than an angel with a thimble, and who is skillful with the needle, who goes from house to house to mend the family stockings, sew on buttons and repair whatever needs repairing in the week’s wash. That is the visiting mender, and a much-needed individual in hundreds of households, where the mother would rather pay fifty cents for a quick morning’s work than to waste her own precious time taking stitches. A regular seamstress is, perhaps, too expensive, but the visiting mender, deft of hand, comes within the possibility of the average household. Any lady who understands the art of darning and mending would soon find this sort of business paid. Such a vocation may be humble, for it does not demand a ‘higher education,’ but it is one to command respect, and would certainly be appreciated by

many women whose own employments give them no chance to apply the stitch in time that is believed to save nine. Young mothers who would like to keep up with the procession, but find the mending-basket an obstruction, and the gayer butterflies who have no taste for replacing missing buttons on their boots and gloves, are some of the people who would bless such a visitor as the professional mender."

Now Miss Jenkins knew what she was talking about ; she knows it by experience, just as I do, just as all women do who lead busy lives, and have to let some things go because they cannot possibly attend to every thing in the world. You and I both know that bright women may do a good deal, may, in fact, almost achieve the impossible, but there is, after all, a point at which they must stop. I remember once looking over all my dresses to find one to put on. Something was the matter with every one, and the matter finally resolved itself into the puzzle which could be made ready to put on with the least outlay of time. A friend, who was the Art Critic on one of the leading Boston dailies, was

waiting for me. As she saw my despair deepen, her own feeling found expression in words.

“I would give a good slice out of my salary, and so would you,” she said, “to find a woman who would come with scissors and thimble once a week and put us in order. Who wouldn’t ask a single question, but would go through closets, and drawers, and stocking bags, and shoe bags, and would mend the holes and sew on the missing strings and buttons, replace the bit of frayed braid, sew up the rip in the pocket, brush the flounces, and make everything ready to put on. But such a woman isn’t to be found. I have tried and I know. I have suggested it to half a dozen or more women who have come to me wanting something to do, and such a sniff of disdain as I receive. They all want to be companions, or copyists, or something ‘genteel,’ until I am so tired of them and their mock pretensions that I don’t know what to do. They are dying to get something to do; work is a necessity; they appeal to my sympathy, and yet

when I show the work that lies right at their hand they refuse to see it, and make me feel as though I had insulted them by the mere proposition."

And that has been so much the case. I know my friend was right because I have had a like experience, and it is the testimony of many other women. It is annoying to a busy woman to have to stop to sew on the missing button when she is in great haste and her work of the utmost importance. It is aggravating beyond measure, when she is so tired after a day's hard mental labor that she can hardly see, when every nerve is quivering under the lash of stimulation, to make a longer day with the needle in repairing something that must be made ready for the next day's wearing. Oh! if the other woman could but be found to meet this woman's needs. I have not exaggerated; every woman whose days are filled with mental labor will tell you the same story. There is a disinclination to manual exertion, that becomes positive physical pain,

after a day that has been so wearing alike to brain and nerve. And the worst of it is one can never make the rest of the world know the absolute torture that she is suffering, at the very thought of physical exertion. And it is the help that comes in ways like this, that one is so ready to pay for, if one can only get it, that makes the real rest.

And there are men that feel this need as well as women; young men who live in boarding-houses, and have no one to look after their clothing and make the needed repairs. They would make a good and a willing class of customers; it could be easily arranged that the work for this class could be taken to one's home, and then returned when it was finished.

A young woman in New York, who evidently took the sensible view of things, already has a very good and paying business among just this class of persons. She has made her own way, and has been very successful.

I have had one or two women tell me that

they tried to do this work, but they could not get it.

“How did you try?” I asked them.

“Oh! I put an advertisement in the paper, but nobody answered it.”

Well, that isn't so very strange. An advertisement of that sort gets easily lost to sight in the midst of so many “wants” as appear in the papers. Personal endeavor is what is needed, and that was what won for the New York girl of whom I have just spoken. Perhaps you would like to know just what she did, and how she did it. You know, in this world, we all build our own endeavors upon the lines of some one else's success. It is perfectly natural. Life is, after all, a sort of serious game of “follow my leader,” and what is already done or achieved, it is quite a matter of course that some one else tries. And so for the way in which the girl I have told you of went to work. In the first place she didn't advertise. She got some cards printed with her name and address, and her business on

them. These she took to the large stores and gave them herself to the clerks, at the same time explaining her project. She then said she would call at a stated time for the work. Of course it was an experiment; she did not know how it would succeed, but she felt that it was worth the trying. I wish I could remember the list of prices that she gave on her card, but the only thing I can remember was that the stocking mending was from five to ten cents a pair, according to the amount to be done. Of course all the prices were small, but the aggregate she thought might be good. She came for the bundles at the promised time, and the very first day she had her shopping bag, a good-sized one, much more than full, so she had to have a separate parcel made. These she returned at the promised time, and the next week she had a still larger quantity, so that she had to have the bundles sent by a messenger boy. Her work has increased until now she has a boy constantly employed to get and return the parcels, and has

two assistant menders. Now what one woman has done, another may do if she will only go to work in the right way.

This occupation rightly managed need not be an unpleasant one. To one who loves her needle, it may be very delightful. The art of mending, in our day, is a much neglected one, but it was one of which our grandmothers were very proud. Fine mending was a species of exquisite needlework, and it ranked with embroidery in nicety of detail. The old-time gentlewoman could mend any thing, from household linen to lace ; she darned stockings until it was a delight to see the fine stitches, and she set a patch absolutely by the thread. The mending-basket was an indispensable article, and it was always well-stocked. Did the least bit of wear show itself in the table-linen, it was taken in hand at once and darned to a new strength. Did body linen wear, a patch was set in so neatly that the garment never had the appearance of an old one. To mend well was an accomplishment of which

every woman was proud. The advent of the sewing-machine, while it was undoubtedly a great saving of time to many women, did, nevertheless, do more than anything to lessen the respect for hand sewing. Still a few old-fashioned people have always insisted that certain parts of the sewing shall be done by hand, so that a few have kept up the practice. In the cities the teaching of sewing in the public schools has made good needle-women of the girls who are coming now to take their places among the world's workers, and with the knowledge of the work has come a respect for it, that is one of the most hopeful signs of the times. The girls in the schools are taught to mend and repair, as well as to make garments, and many of these may find a way to a pleasant support through the medium of her little shining implement of industry. The mending is recommended as something well worth thinking of.

There are families who need such work done for them as well as the army of single men and

women. Many a tired, overworked mother dreads the sight of the weekly mending-basket, and would be very glad if she could get a few hours' help each week from somebody. I have heard many a woman say this, but she always ends by saying that she can find no one who will do it. She can easily get a seamstress or dressmaker by the day; but she can't afford to pay their prices for the work she wants. If she could employ somebody by the hour, who would go away when her work was done, and go cheerfully because somebody else was waiting for her, it would be the greatest possible comfort in the world. There is the same difficulty here that so often exists; that of getting the employer and the worker together. "I know just what I want to do," a woman once said to me, after detailing a plan of work, "and I also know that there is somebody in the world who wants done just what I can do; now why won't some person set us toward each other, so that we may meet?"

It is hard to answer that puzzle ; but usually the only "setting towards" is done by the worker, and it must be confessed that sometimes even with trying the result is long in coming. But there is also another thing, which may partially offset the slowness of attainment ; when once success has crowned effort, it is apt to increase, for when one gets the first chance, others are sure to follow. So in starting in as "visiting mender," or as the mender who takes her work home, you must recognize the value of the first patron. One brings another always, and if your work is done well, you will find your patrons increasing.

CHAPTER X.

REAL ESTATE BROKERAGE.

PERHAPS a recent experience, related by a friend who bears "the girls" and their welfare quite near her heart, may show why it is that so many fail to make a good living in the world as independent workers, and become the grumblers and the hangers-on to the skirts of skilled labor. This friend had the misfortune to lose the secretary who had been with her for some time, and it became necessary to fill her place. One would think that out of the army of waiting and wanting women this would have been an easy thing to do; but not so did she find it. She wanted a young woman who could do type-writing, write from dictation, copy legibly, and answer business letters. "Not a diffi-

cult position to fill," do I hear some of you say? Well, so she thought when she began her search, and so I thought, too, when she told me of her need. But she changed her mind before she had been long searching, and I had occasion to indulge in some serious thinking when she gave me the benefit of her experience.

She had interviewed over half a hundred applicants for the position, but without success. One girl had never run a type-writing machine, but thought she could learn to use it in time by practice; one had been a housekeeper, but had an idea she would rather be a private secretary, although she wasn't much used to writing. But the most of them were utterly without an idea of what would be the duties, and were hopelessly ignorant, not only of those requirements, but evidently of every other so far as work was concerned.

One young woman came who said she needed a position; she had finished school and wanted something to do. She must have it, indeed, as

her people could not afford to let her be idle. She was young, prettily dressed, and had rather pleasing manners, and my friend was really in hopes that here at last she had found what she needed. She defined the duties.

"But I cannot use the type-writer," was the first comment.

"Are you quick to learn?" queried my friend whose interest and sympathy had been awakened.

"I don't know," was the reply. "I might try."

"Can you write from dictation?"

"What's that?"

"Can you write if told what to say?"

"I don't know; I never tried."

"Can you write a business letter?"

"What do you mean?"

"Well, supposing you were my secretary, and I had a letter come from a publisher, asking me if I could do a piece of work, and how much I should ask for it, and I told you to say that I would do it, and gave you the price I should demand, what would you say?"

"Why, dear me! I don't know. I never did such a thing in my life," was the reply.

Plainly she would not do as a secretary, but, having a soft heart for winsome girls, my friend thought perhaps she could help her by giving her employment in another direction; there's always enough in a busy woman's household to be done, so she said: "Can you sew? Could you make some underclothing for me and help my dressmaker about my spring dresses?"

"O, dear, no! my mother hires all my sewing done for me."

"Well, can you assist about a house? can you cook?"

"O, no! I don't know anything about housework; that is, not much. I set the table sometimes."

She was given up as a hopeless task, and my friend is still looking for a secretary.

Perhaps this may seem exaggerated, but I assure you that it is not, and it is only one of several similar experiences.

And with no better equipment, girls confidently seek for places and then wonder that they do not get them, or that having gotten them they do not succeed in keeping them.

Now a young man would hardly venture in business life without some idea of what he was going to do, and he would expect to give some time at learning the profession that was to give him a livelihood. Why should a girl expect to come at once into a position that it would take a boy some time and a good deal of work to attain?

Please don't jump at a wrong conclusion now and think that I am making the sweeping assertion that all girls are unprepared for their work; this is a very great mistake. I know that there are girls as well prepared as boys, but I know, too, that they are the exception rather than the rule. Girls do not take the idea of business so seriously as boys do. It is not the great thing for them; it is not the life work. And yet it may be. No girl can tell when she begins at

what time she may leave off. And at any event, to make success sure for herself, and the way easier for other girls who come after her, she should see to it that she does her work with care and with interest. You and I are not doing our work solely for ourselves; there is something beyond individual interest, even if we refuse to recognize it. Our success or failure is not ours alone; it is that of every other woman who shall come after us, working along the lines in which we have worked. What we do makes it either more difficult or more easy for them. We cannot afford to be selfish in our way of regarding this question, and to think that it makes no difference how we do, it is our loss and gain. If it were ours alone, we might; but it is that of every other woman worker. Earnestness and determination are necessary to success, no matter in what line our work may be done.

If I had been given the opportunity to speak to the young girl my friend told me of, I think I

should have said to her that she would find it very hard to find the congenial work to do until she had proven that she could do well what came to her. If it was the housework assistance to an over-tired mother she should do that, and in doing it cheerfully and well she would find that she was ready for the next step, and the way would be opened for her to take it. There is really work enough in the world to do; the trouble is to find the competent workers.

But I started to make a suggestion, and I have had so much else to say that the thought almost was overlooked. A business that women are taking up, and are succeeding well in, is that of real estate brokerage. It certainly has no features that women would find difficult or unpleasant. There are two in Boston vicinity, who are doing remarkably well, and I think there are others in other cities; but these two I know personally, and I know just how successful they both are. One is Mrs. Woelper of Boston, and the other is Mrs. La Coste of Malden. Both of

them were in other business, and came into this gradually, and, from the nature of things, inevitably. Mrs. La Coste kept a fancy goods store in the city of Malden, but her health failing, she was obliged to get some business that took her out of doors, and some friends gave her some houses to manage. She sold her own business, and managed so successfully with the estates in her hands, that others gave her opportunities, and now she has all she can do. Mrs. Woelper is a Southern woman, born in New Orleans, but of Northern parents. Her husband was connected with one of the New Orleans papers, and when he died she found that she must look out for herself. She was given a position in the post-office in New Orleans, and she was an expert at deciphering illegible writing, so that her position was one of great responsibility. But she could not endure the confinement and all the time her heart was going out to New England, the birthplace of her ancestors. She had a little property in New

Orleans, and she managed it so wisely that it yielded her a good return. She liked the work of looking after it, too, and when finally she made up her mind that she would give up her position and come North, she also made up her mind that she would go into the real estate business. To think and to act were simultaneous, and she speedily found herself in Boston, where she took an office, and began to advertise. She had a few friends, they helped her what they could, but the greater part of her work has been done by sheer persistent and untiring effort.

There is a very good story told of her, that will bear repeating, since I am sure it will be new to you all; and it will prove just what kind of a worker she is, and show the spirit which she has manifested all the time since she set out in her new business.

It happened during the somewhat dull season of two years ago. A gentleman was talking with a real estate dealer quite prominent in Boston.

“And so you say business is dull?” said he.

“Yes; there doesn’t seem to be any one doing a thing except ourselves and that fellow Woelper, down in the Equitable Building,” was the reply.

“Indeed,” said the gentleman, “is that so—by the way, do you know ‘that fellow Woelper’?”

“Never saw him,” was the answer, “but I tell you he’s a ‘hustler.’”

“Well, I know him; supposing we go down and make him a call.”

So off they went, and you can imagine what the man thought when he found that his “hustler,” “that fellow Woelper,” was a very pretty, quite young woman, with refined manners, and a head as keen for business as his own. To use his expression when speaking of it afterwards, you might have knocked him over with a feather.

Mrs. Woelper is an enthusiast in her business. She says it is hard work, and carries a weight of responsibility with it, but it is pleasant, profitable and healthful. It compels the person who follows it to be a good deal in the open air, and

keeps her well in spite of herself. Of course a woman must have business ability ; she must have the tact that shall enable her to meet people pleasantly, and adapt herself to them. She must have a knowledge of market values of buildings and lands. She must understand all the laws that relate to the governing of real estate ; of the conveying of mortgages, and all the other business technicalities. She must be up in the science of drainage and ventilation, so that she may be able to judge of the sanitary conditions of a house ; but this is something that every woman should understand, in order that she may protect herself and her family against the dangers that come from bad drainage and poor ventilation. There is nothing in all this that a bright woman may not learn, and learn very readily. It sounds much more formidable than it really is. Neither Mrs. Woelper nor Mrs. La Coste have found any difficulty whatever in acquiring all the knowledge needed. They did not gain it all at once ;

it has come by degrees as the need of it has been felt. Women are adaptable, very much more so than men, as a rule, and since this is true, there is no reason why they should not succeed as real estate brokers, since one of the greatest needs is that of adapting themselves to the persons with whom they come in contact. They must be as deeply interested in the man or woman who has a small place for sale, or who desires to purchase a cheap house, as they are in those who have the larger commissions for them. It is Mrs. Woelper's plan that every customer shall bring another, and she works constantly with that end in view. And, my dear girls, who purpose to go into business, that is a good plan to go on always. Said a merchant to me one day, after he had reproved a clerk for carelessness and inattention, and had met with the excuse that all the woman wanted was a paper of needles :

“ It isn't the value of the sale ; it is the fact of the sale. A woman comes here for a paper of

needles ; if she is made to feel that it is a pleasure to serve her, she is coming again ; not only will she come herself, but she will send others. If I lose her because the needles are given her as though she had insulted the store by making so small a purchase, it is a pretty expensive paper of needles for me ; I don't care to pay the price."

And that is true of all sorts of business transactions. If it is made pleasant the result is sensibly felt, and if it is made unpleasant, the result is just as apparent, and not satisfactorily so. Just bear that in mind, girls, and you've learned one lesson in the economies of business, and have obtained a principle that will be a help to you all the way through.

CHAPTER XI.

INSURANCE AND ADVERTISING.

THERE is nothing in the world that gives one greater pleasure than to feel that some word spoken in earnest, and with a real purpose in it, meets with a response from another who seems to be waiting to catch just that word. It is such a blessed assurance that nothing is undertaken in vain; that seed sowed seemingly at random finds mellow, waiting soil, and springs up, bringing promise of abundant harvest.

It is so pleasant to feel that something you have said has brought suggestion to any one. I speak of this because just now a card has reached me from a young woman who has started out as a tourist guide in her own native city of Boston, and as a commission shopper as well. She has been looking for some time for the something

to do for which she is specially well fitted, and which she would like. She has not sat with folded hands while she has waited, not at all; she has done the work that has come to her to do, but in the meantime she has kept a pair of very bright eyes open for the right thing. It has come at last, and she has started out to see what can be done. I hope she will succeed, and indeed I think she will, for such sturdy courage as she has shown in making her fight with circumstance is not easily daunted. Now if any of my readers are visiting Boston and want some one to show them about, or have friends coming here who are strange to the city and want to see as much as they can in a short time, it would be a very good plan for them to write to Miss Alice C. Bradbury, No. 40 Berkeley street, Boston, and ask her to meet them at the station on their arrival, and attend to them while they are in town. It will be both pleasant and profitable for all parties.

The advantage of a tourist guide was made

more than ever apparent to me by an experience which I had in a railway train not long since. I had taken the cars on the New York and New England railroad for my summer home about twenty-five miles from the city, and was sharing the seat with a very bright, pretty girl, who, I soon found from her conversation with another young lady in the seat back of her, had been "doing" Boston. She was very much mixed up about places and buildings, the only point that she seemed to have distinctly in mind being the Art Museum. Now Copley Square in which the Museum is situated, has about it, as all Bostonians know, some very important buildings. Here is beautiful Trinity Church with La Farge's wonderful interior characters; here is the new Public Library, rapidly approaching completion; here is the new church building of the Old South Society and the new building of the Old Second Church of Boston, and here is the famous Chauncy Hall School from which have graduated so many of Boston's notable men. Why, the lit-

tle triangle that everybody will call a square, is full of interest to the stranger. I heard these young girls wondering about it all, and quite forgetting that they were strangers, I began telling them just what they wanted to know. How glad they were to know all this and how sorry that they had missed the knowledge when they were on the spot. Of course they knew all about Dr. Phillips Brooks, and they were so disappointed when they knew that they had passed by his church, which they might have gone into had they known. The Public Library they had noticed, and the Technology buildings and the Natural History rooms, but did not know what they were. They had had friends from Chauncy Hall and knew all about it, and to think they had been so near it, and did not realize its nearness. I found in talking with them that they really had seen nothing of the city that they should have seen; they had been to Nantasket beach, and had ridden aimlessly about in horse-cars, hoping to stumble upon something.

But they had not been to the beautiful parks, the open-air gymnasium, the old Paul Revere house, the North Church where the lantern hung, nor any of the real places of interest. Now, if they had only had some one to show them about they would have seen all these things, and more too, and would have carried away a very good knowledge of what Boston held of interest.

Just here I would like to say that I wish I could reply personally to all the letters I receive from girls and women, detailing their experiences. It is impossible to do this, however, and I take this opportunity of saying how much in sympathy I am with all the work of endeavor, how glad I am for every success. I wish I could plan ways for all who ask, but that is quite impossible. I can only give the suggestion and the advice; the carrying out must be done by yourselves. I give in my papers, as far as possible, the ways to do, but of course any one attempting the work may find it necessary to modify or adapt these ways to meet individual cases.

You must use judgment and thought, and perhaps you may have to experiment a little, but earnest purpose and courage always win. It may need a little patience; things don't come the first minute; if you can only remember that you are to persist. I have known people who have given up just on the eve of success. They have been almost at the point of attainment when patience and courage have failed them, and they have let go their hold, and lost what they might have kept. This in answer to the many letters and appeals which I have received.

I cannot tell you very much about it, but I know that some women are making a success in the insurance business. I know one woman in Boston who has all she can do. She is making a good income, and has been so successful that she has been given the agency of several of the leading companies of London. She has an office in one of the largest business buildings in the city, and it is a busy place. The detail of work I cannot tell you about, but I know this one

woman says that it is a good and remunerative business for her sex, and she wonders that more of them do not take it up. I don't know whether there is another woman insurance agent in the country, but I know this one, and know that she is an enthusiast in her business. I would like to give you her name, but she is very sensitive about being talked of, and I promised her that I would only give the fact of her success, if she would allow it, as I wanted it to use as a suggestion for some of the girls who might like to try the experiment for themselves. Many women are employed in the agencies as clerks, but I don't believe there are many who have attempted to establish themselves as agents.

Another business which women are entering is that of advertising agents, and in this they have succeeded admirably. The late Mrs. Susan C. Vogl was for many years the advertising agent for the *Woman's Journal*, and she brought the paper into prosperity by her able endeavors. She made herself friends by her

genial cordiality. She was true and honest, and her every statement could be relied upon. Men used to say sometimes that they would give Mrs. Vogl advertisements when they would not give them to any one else. It was Mrs. Vogl's sunniness that won every time, and her genuine good-will to everybody. There are one or two advertising firms in Boston composed of women, and they do a very good business. They have a large number of patrons, and they control several newspapers. They evidently are making money, for everything about them bears the stamp of prosperity.

I know of only one woman who has undertaken railroad advertising, and she has done so well that her story is worth telling. She controls the advertising along the entire line of the New York and New England railroad, and no one can advertise without making the terms through her. When the Chicago fire occurred, she was a happy young wife, with a lovely little baby, living in the midst of luxury, for she was the petted daughter

of rich parents, and the cherished wife of a still more wealthy man. This young couple had everything before them to make life bright and pleasant. Riches, social position, youth, a lovely home, a dear little girl — it seemed as though nothing was wanting. But the fire came, and swept away everything; the home, the property, all, and left them with little beside themselves, and their youth, their baby and their willing hands. If that had been the end! But the husband and father fell ill from exposure at the time of the fire, and died leaving the young wife and baby to face the world alone. They had something left, but not enough to live as the wife would like, and there would be the child to educate. So she came East and went to work. She had friends in plenty, and there were those who were ready to give her a home, and render it unnecessary to labor. But she was an independent body, and she proposed to work out her own destiny. She tried one or two things, going a step in advance every change that she made, until finally this

opportunity came to her. It was a large undertaking, but it found a woman ready to meet it, and not only ready but entirely able. She undertook the work, and is making a great success of it. She has an office in Boston where she makes her contracts, attending personally to them, for she has found that her own judgment is better than any one's whom she can obtain, and the terms are sure to be more satisfactory if she makes them herself. She is a capital business woman, and no man ever attempts taking unfair advantage because she is a woman. Throughout all she has remained the same refined, charming woman that she was when she was a purely society woman; and she is so evidently the gentlewoman that men become more gracious when in her presence, recognizing the womanly element even when in the most intricate of business problems. Her little daughter has grown to gracious sweet womanhood, under a careful mother's eye, and is the housekeeper and home companion in a dear little cosey home in a fash-

ionable quarter of Boston, where she is surrounded by the friends who have stood by her all through her career.

It is the presence of women of this kind in the business world that makes it a desirable place for other women. It is the influence of women like this that makes it easier for other women when they are in the world, and it is an example like hers that should be regarded by the women who are to become business women.

There is one thing that this woman does not do that I would like to emphasize. She does not consider it necessary, because she has her way to make in the world, and because she does it in the business world, to copy the dress and manners of the men whom she meets. She is essentially womanly in dress and manner. She does not wear Henley shirts nor four-in-hand neckties. She is content to be a woman, and to keep her womanly ways. She wears, as she should, simple tailor-made dresses at her office, but there is no suggestion of mannishness about them. Her bon-

nets are becoming, and her hair prettily arranged. All the trifling accessories of the toilette are attended to, and she is as fresh and dainty in her office gown as she is in her pretty dresses at home.

I wish I could imbue every girl who is setting out to make her own way with the idea that she will get on better, and win more genuine respect from those she comes in contact with, if she keeps her refined femininity, than she will by aping the men in dress or manner. Boldness is not independence, self-assertion is not success. Be what you are, and assume nothing else. Gain respect for your sex, by the respect that you win for yourself, by your honest, fearless, but sweet true womanliness.

CHAPTER XII.

PIANO AND ORGAN TUNING.

I DON'T know how many of the girls who are searching through these papers in the hope of finding the suggestion that shall open the way for their own advancement, know what successful piano and organ tuners girls make, nor how many there are employed in this business. Has it always seemed to you a man's business? Well, why should it be? It is pleasant, not difficult, and more sheltered than many other employments which take women out of their homes.

The first time that I ever saw them at such work, or even knew that they had attempted it, was when I visited the Estey Organ Factory in Brattleboro, Vt., a few years ago. This pretty town in the Connecticut valley was my girlhood's

home, and on a return visit, I went through the enlarged organ manufactory, in company with my friend, Mrs. Fuller, whose father, Deacon Jacob Estey, was the founder of the business, and whose husband was a partner in the house. As we came out into the hall that led into the tuning department, Mrs. Fuller said to me :

“ You will find somebody in here whom you know,” at the same time opening a door.

As I entered a young woman looked up from the organ she was tuning, with an exclamation of surprise which I echoed. It was a former schoolmate, whom I had not seen since we were in school together. I was surprised to find her there, and from her I learned that she was by no means the only woman employed there in the same capacity — that of tuner.

“ Deacon Estey,” as every one called him, was a very progressive man, and his daughter stood in as high regard as his son in the family. He believed in woman’s capacity and ability to do the finer parts of mechanical work, and when

the opportunity came he put his theory to a practical test. When a woman was introduced into the factory, the men tuners were very indignant, and after holding a meeting at which they expressed themselves very freely, and worked themselves into a very wrathful frame of mind, they waited upon their employer and demanded that the offending woman be sent away. The alternative was given him of discharging her or losing them. He listened to them very patiently, and when they were through, he answered them with as much determination as they had shown, but with no anger. The woman was there, she did her work satisfactorily, she was to stay. Of course they could do as they chose about remaining; every man had a right to do what seemed best for himself; but he should never be guilty of an injustice to please any one. The men listened, withdrew—and stayed. As the work increased and the business was enlarged, other women were taken in.

It is a pleasure to be able to record that this

introduction of women was not made in the interests of "economy"; they received the same wages as the men who did the same kind of work, and had every advantage that was given their fellow workers. Good Deacon Estey has gone on, out of this world, but women should always have a kindly thought for him, and hold him in grateful remembrance.

A few years since, not more than ten, in response to the rapidly increasing demand for practical instruction in tuning pianos, there was introduced into the New England Conservatory a department which should afford special facilities for the development of this important art. Among those who applied for admission were a number of young women; they were cordially welcomed, for Dr. Tourjee is another man who believes in the capacity of women to excel in various directions. Their progress was noted with special interest, for these were the first, so far as can be learned, who had undertaken, in Boston, at least, a systematic study of the theory

and practice of tuning. To the great satisfaction of the management, their advancement was from the start both rapid and thorough, and before the first term was ended, it became evident that a new field of endeavor had been found for girls. As time passed, the highest expectations were abundantly realized; the young women easily kept pace with the young men who were pursuing the same course, and amply proved their entire ability to excel in this new line of work. From that time the proportion of women to men students has constantly increased, until now they bid fair to be in the majority; and years of active effort by the women who have received an education in this department have proved beyond a question their special adaptation to the work.

In introducing this new profession for women it was fully expected that the same prejudice and opposition would be encountered which have always greeted any innovation, and those who were instrumental in bringing the move-

ment forward, prepared themselves carefully to defend it. They knew that the objections would be just what they turned out to be. The first one was that young women would lack the necessary physical strength. To this they had the ready reply that the demands made upon the strength were not so great as were those made in factories, mills, sewing rooms, or even kitchens; in fact, that the tuner's work was not so fatiguing as were many of the employments in which women were constantly engaged, and which came under the head of "women's work." The second objection made was that women as a rule lacked mechanical ingenuity. The only answer needed to this objection was to point to the many manufactories where the nicest mechanical skill is necessary, and which are crowded by women operatives. The third objection was that women lacked the power of application necessary to the acquirement of a difficult mechanical art. Time has answered that argument, as it alone could, and the expe-

rience of the years since the department was first instituted has proven that young women, with the naturally delicate ear and touch, possess peculiar qualifications for this work, and that the fine discrimination necessary to the tuning of an instrument is characteristic of them.

The attractions which the profession of tuning presents are many. The work itself is well classed among the arts, being the correct adjustment of a musical instrument to the purposes of artistic expression. But I said in the beginning that the occupations to be considered would not lie in the provinces of the arts or professions, so, to be quite consistent, I shall speak of this new work as an employment or a business.

The manual labor necessary to the accomplishment of this branch of work is calculated to make it healthful and strengthening, and the mental application is sufficient to impart zest and interest to it, while it is attended also with the satisfaction of immediate results. Aside from the limited amount of tuning done during

the construction of the instrument, the sphere of the tuner in the homes of the people, or in the warerooms of music dealers, lies in sharp contrast to the life in shops and mills. The profession is conspicuously one in which there is, and is to be, plenty of room. A glance at the actual condition of the country, as concerns the tuning of pianos, and the numbers of instruments demanding constant attention, proves this. In the cities, naturally enough, the profession is fairly represented, although there the number of thoroughly educated tuners is limited, while, as I dare say many of you realize, in almost any part of the United States there are whole counties, containing hundreds of pianos, with new ones being constantly added, where only an occasional traveling tuner can be found to hurriedly attend to them all. With the vast number of old pianos, which each year demand more care as they show additional signs of wear, and the thousands of new ones, which scores of manufactories are producing yearly,

to say nothing of many times the number of organs, there is surely no occupation which promises a more abundant and ever-increasing business than this of tuning. Every piano made requires care, whether it is used much or little. And as the country increases in wealth and the art of music becomes more universal, especially as pianos become lower in price and are in even greater demand than now, the question very naturally arises, who shall keep these countless numbers in condition to be used? This then is a new field of labor opening to women, another avenue in which our girls may seek employment.

Not every girl would succeed; not every girl will be attracted to the new field; but there is work and remuneration for those who are. In regard to the qualifications necessary to a perfect acquirement of this business, it may be said that a correct musical ear, a fair amount of musical intelligence, and a desire to excel, are the requisites.

It has been impossible in these chapters to do more than indicate certain ways, out of many others, by which girls may obtain a livelihood, and make an assured future for themselves. If the hints that have been given shall be found to contain anything of value to the readers, if any have been helped out of dark places, and set on the way with faces toward the light, I shall feel that the work has not been in vain.

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